

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Original) A preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma, comprising HGF or a salt thereof as an active ingredient.

2. (Original) The preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma according to claim 1, wherein HGF is a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1 or 2, a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence substantially identical to an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1 or 2, or a partial peptide thereof.

3. (Original) A preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma, comprising a DNA encoding HGF as an active ingredient.

4. (Original) The preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma according to claim 3, wherein the DNA encoding HGF is a DNA comprising a base sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 3 or 4, or a base sequence which hybridizes with a base sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 3 or 4 under highly stringent conditions.

5. (Currently amended) The preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma according to claim 3-~~or~~4, wherein the DNA encoding HGF is inserted into a recombinant expression vector.

6. (Original) The preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma according to claim 5, wherein the recombinant expression vector is adeno-associated virus (AAV), adenovirus, retrovirus, poxvirus, herpesvirus, herpes simplex virus, lentivirus (HIV), sendai virus, Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), vaccinia virus, poliovirus, sindbis virus, SV40, pCAGGS, pBK-CMV, pcDNA3.1 or pZeoSV.

7. (Currently amended) The preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma according to claim 5-~~or~~6, wherein the recombinant expression vector is further contained in a host cell.

8. (Currently amended) The preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 7~~ claim 3, wherein the DNA encoding HGF, or the recombinant expression vector containing the DNA encoding HGF is contained in a liposome or a microcapsule.

9. (Currently amended) The preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1, further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

10. (Original) A method for preventing or treating asthma, comprising suppressing airway inflammation by administering an effective amount of HGF or a salt thereof to a mammal.

11. (Original) A method for preventing or treating asthma, comprising suppressing airway inflammation by administering an effective amount of a DNA encoding HGF to a mammal.

12. (Currently amended) ~~Use of HGF or a salt thereof~~ A method for preparing a preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma, which comprises ~~suppressing airway inflammation~~ mixing HGF or a salt thereof with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

13. (Currently amended) ~~Use of a DNA encoding HGF~~ A method for preparing a preventive or therapeutic agent for asthma, which comprises ~~suppressing airway inflammation~~ inserting a DNA encoding HGF into a recombinant expression vector.